

Guru Nanak The Usherer-In of the Golden Age

— Late Dr. Bhai Sher Singh (Kashmir) M.Sc. (Hons.), PhD, PFS (Hons.), Fellow of Chemical Society of America, Great Britain & Member of Royal Asiatic society of England & Ireland.

Man passes through kaleidoscopic changes in his life and nothing truer or more telling than what one experiences in his own life. There was a time in my life when I thought Heaven or more exactly the Kingdom of Heaven is as much cut off from this dirty earth as day is cut off from night. But that was the period of my spiritual infancy; adolescence was yet to come. I was then groping in the dark, in the desert of science and in the jungle of philosophy. Nominally, I was a Sikh, but at heart I 'was not a true disciple of the Gurus', for what I read in the Guru Granth did not then descend deep into my heart; what came in one ear went out of the other. But Guru Nanak, my dearest Nanak, was only playing the 'hide and seek' with me. He was letting me stop — stop only to conquer; he was letting me grope in darkness but to grope only to come out into the open broad daylight! As sure as the magnet attracts the little needle, as sure as the night brings the morning dew in its train, as true as the autumn has spring hidden in its bosom, so sure did the great Guru Nanak attract me, yes press me to his loving and palpitating bosom, and transform me into his real disciple (for the word Sikh: means one who is through and through a disciple)!

'Now when I look back, I feel that "Dukh Daru Sukh Rog Bhaya" is merely our training ground; trails and tribulations are our mentors. They are the foundations on 'which spiritual edifice must rest, but the edifice is different from the worldly possessions which our millionaires and monarchs possess. It is not in wealth, in Rolls Royce cars, in aero planes, that the Kingdom of Heaven lies. It is of course here on the earth all the time, yes it is hidden from us even as this outside world is sealed to one who is born blind.

Guru Nanak is dear to me, dearer to me than my own life, because he worked a miracle in the little life of this little self. I was deaf and he gave ears to hear; I was blind and he gave me eyes to see. I was half and he gave me legs to walk; I was forlorn and forsaken and he picked me up, suckled me at his breast and made me his own — one of his many true disciples!

And if you now ask me as to what constitutes the secrets of this change, as to what is the concomitment of this change. I will simply say that the change is a Akath Katha in other words ineffable bliss. I feel lighter, easier, more buoyant. I feel as if a heavy burden has been rolled off from my breast. I feel I have come out of the cave which was surrounded with Cimmerian darkness. The change! Ah the change! It is golden; it is like the glory of the sunlit clouds; it is imperceptible, yet it is there, welling up, swelling up from somewhere within me through every pore of my body, oozing out, bubbling out, gushing out from the Inner Fountain which has been unlocked. Guru Nanak, the wonderful wizard was at first, so much cut off from me as he was from the old Wali Qandhari, between whom and Guru Nanak there lay an interminable chain of a mountain. But that very separation has become the measure of the ultimate unity of God and man: for Mardana felt the thirst, and his thirst could not be satisfied by Wali Qandhari, out came the Guru with his New Fountain which bears his lotus-palm mark for all time! Yes I also felt that this New Panja Sahib was opened somewhere in the barren hillock of my mind, and if you could take the surgeon's scalpel in your hands and tear open my heart, I can assure you that you will find there impressed the same lotus-palm mark, the same Panja Sahib in my heart, as you find in that Harimandar of which the foundation stone was laid

only the other day! In one word, therefore, the secret of change lies in the discovery of Hidden Fountain of life and Guru Nanak alone can work this miracle, for did he not conquer other Sidhs & Pirs of whom Wali Qandhari is but a symbol and a type!

Religion, true religion, is not a matter of ceremonies and formalities, although they have their use; it is something intangible like the bloom of the petals of rose. If you want to imbibe this something impalpable, this mysterious spark of life, you must betake yourself heart and soul to the great Guru, Guru Granth Which is true Image of Guru Nanak. You cannot get milk out of stones, nor honey from cobra plant; likewise you cannot get the water of life from anyone other than Nanak, for others hoard it up like Wali Qandhari, but Guru Nanak came on this earth to open the spring of life to one and all, so that all may be benefited thereby.

Today, on the holy occasion of his anniversary, my message to my brethren is to be above all true disciples, for Sikhism is essentially discipleship. If you could control your little self as the students are expected to do, if your attention centered on Nam as the students pore over their books a day will come, your life, as it has become in the case of many sinners, when Sajjan the Thag will become a Saint, yea when a new Panja Sahib will be opened in your hearts when that kingdom of Heaven, which is now cut off from you, will come within your own heart and soul! Guru Nanak can take us out of iron age into golden age. He came on earth to usher in the Golden Age. This secret is divulged in the Guru Granth Sahib. The key to the Kingdom of Heaven is Sat-Nam.

If you do not use the key, the fault is yours. His! Come one, Come all; all that thirst for new life! Guru Nanak will open out in you the spring of life, a new 'Panja Sahib'!